

## **PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD**

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2001**

**3:00 P.M., J. MARTIN GRIESEL ROOM, CENTENNIAL PLAZA II**

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:00 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with members Bloomfield, Borys, Raser, Senhauser, Spraul-Schmidt, Sullebarger and Wallace present. Members absent: Kreider and Dale.

### **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Monday, November 19, 2001 meeting were approved (motion by Spraul-Schmidt second by Borys).

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 2327 UPLAND PLACE, UPLANDS HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Adrienne Cowden summarized the staff report recommending approval of an application to remove alterations to an existing front porch and rebuild lost portions compatible with the house. She said a large portion of the original superstructure is still in place and other details may reappear when modern alterations are removed. The applicant proposes to construct a new porch floor, entry steps, columns and balustrade based on an historic photograph. Only the owner attended a pre-hearing; there have been no comments from the community.

Mr. Phil Cameron, the owner, was present; he circulated a vintage photograph of the house and answered questions. Mr. Cameron said the porch and new front steps are shown as wood in drawings submitted, but he said he might want to do them in concrete. He said the porch floor would not be visible from the street and the lines of the original porch would be carried to the ground by piers and lattice in-fill panels. The handrails on the steps would repeat the balustrade of the porch. Ms. Sullebarger said that since the original porch floor and steps were probably wood, she would prefer the replacements also be wood. Mr. Cameron confirmed that all visible surfaces would be finished and painted.

Ms. Dianne McElwain, 2200 Upland Place; Mr. Kenneth Siegel, 2330 Upland Place; Mr. Charles E Strain, 2330 Upland Place; and Ms. Jan Weigel, 2214 Upland Place, spoke in favor of the proposal. Mr. Strain was assured that reconstruction of the rear porch is not included in this application.

### **BOARD ACTION**

Voting unanimously (motion by Bloomfield second by Raser), the Board:

1. Found that the proposed porch design meets the Uplands Historic District guidelines; and

2. Approved a Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition that final construction drawings and proposed exterior finishes/elements be submitted to the Urban Conservator for approval prior to construction.

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 500 EAST 12th STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE (SOUTH) HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Urban Conservator William Forwood summarized the staff report recommending disapproval of a COA for coiling security shutters, already installed on the storefront of 500 East 12th Street. The shutters were installed without a building permit and do not comply with historic district guidelines. No one attended the pre-hearing conference; one telephone call in opposition was received.

Mr. Joseph Salh of the Deli on 12th was present to answer questions from the Board. Mr. Salh explained that he had installed the shutters because attempted to break-ins have damaged his door and windows. Mr. Bloomfield said the shutters, as installed, are an inappropriate eyesore giving the impression there is a security problem in the neighborhood and that other large windows in the immediate area have not been bothered. In response to a question from Ms. Sullebarger, Mr. Salh said he has obtained some financial relief from the City for one of the break-ins. Members of the Board urged Mr. Salh to pursue compensation from the security company that installed the shutters without a permit.

**BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Bloomfield second by Raser) to uphold the staff recommendation to disapprove a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of roll-down security windows and doors at 500 East 12th Street in the Over-the-Rhine (South) Historic District and denied a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as installed.

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE AND CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 323 WEST FIFTH STREET, WEST FOURTH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam distributed illustrations and summarized the staff report for an application for a variance to allow the installation of a cast iron fence and gate at a private parking lot serving 323 West Fifth Street. A variance is required to allow a six-foot high fence without masonry piers at the rear of the property along Perry Street. Staff recommended approval of the proposal as meeting the historic district guidelines and an appropriate alternative to that required by the Downtown Development District. No one attended a pre-hearing; one neighbor who inquired about the project made no objection.

Mr. Tim Voss, owner and developer of the project, was present to answer question from the Board. Mr. Voss indicated that the new gate would match the fence and operate horizontally in an underground channel. In answer to Mr. Bloomfield, Mr. Voss said plantings would be low-maintenance and would be tended by the homeowners' association. Mr. Bloomfield suggested that an automatic sprinkler/irrigation system be installed to ensure maintenance of the landscaping.

**BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Bloomfield second by Raser) to

1. Find that all conditions stipulated in 1443-507 of the Cincinnati Zoning Code (Standards for Granting a Variance) outlined in the staff report are met.
2. Grant a variance of Section 1443-408 (h) (Fencing of Surface Parking Lots) of the Cincinnati Zoning Code to waive the fencing requirement for surface parking lots.
3. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed parking lot improvements with the following conditions:
  - a) The parking lot and landscaping shall be kept free of debris and properly maintained, with vegetation replaced if necessary.
  - b) Any proposed signs, additional lighting or changes to the plans for parking lot Improvements at 323 West Fifth Street shall be submitted to the Urban Conservator for final review and approval prior to issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness.

**ZONING VARIANCE, 1445-1447 WALNUT STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE (SOUTH) HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Daniel Young summarized the application of Mr. Paul Byrnside, registered surveyor, representing the owner, to reconfigure two existing lots into three. Each of the two new lots (facing Walnut Street) contain existing building and would require a zoning variance for being undersized. The third lot created from the rear portions of 1445 and 1447 Walnut would front on Liberty Street; that lot contains a building to the rear of 1445 Walnut Street. Mr. Young said that that rear building has a severely bulging wall that may necessitate demolition. He said approval of the lot reconfiguration will only grant a zoning variance; it does not include curb cut permits or any physical work on the structures or site.

**BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Sullebarger second by Bloomfield) to approve the requested variances to the Cincinnati Zoning Code, as summarized in the chart included in the staff report, for the lot division of properties located at 1445-1447 Walnut Street, finding that such relief from the literal implication of the Zoning Code:

1. Is necessary and appropriate in the interest of historic conservation so as not to adversely affect the historic architectural, or aesthetic integrity of the district; and
2. Will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare or injurious to property in the district or vicinity where the property is located.

**PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE BOUNDED BY WALNUT, EAST 14TH, MAIN AND MELINDY STREETS, OVER-THE-RHINE (SOUTH) HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Kellam introduced Mark Gunther, architect, who represented Miami Purchase Preservation Fund and Urban Sites Properties, the owners and developers of this project. Mr. Gunther showed an overall site plan and elevations of the new townhouses to be built on the site. He indicated that the project will require demolition of garage structures on and facing Clay Street and the rehabilitation of adjacent buildings facing Main and Walnut Streets. Mr. Gunther said the development will include both market rate (75%) and affordable housing (25%) loft apartments and townhouses. The first phase would be

construction of a group of two model five-story townhouses near Melindy and Clay Streets. Mr. Gunther said his clients were most interested in getting the Board's reaction to the total scheme as details are being developed.

Mr. Gunther said that each building would contain a garage; most are entered from a rear motorcourt, but some have street-face entrances where rear entrances would be difficult or awkward. The townhouses are in five groups along Clay and Walnut and to the north side of the site off the motorcourt. He said the size and scale of the proposed buildings is comparable to others in OTR with storefronts on the street level; some street-level space may be used for retail or office. Exterior walls will be metal with fiber-cement board trim; roofs will be metal sheds with skylights/dormers. Upper floor fenestration will include metal balconies and reflect the first floor openings. The interior courtyard will provide additional surface parking and landscaping.

Ms. Borys said that it was difficult to evaluate the project from the isolated site plan and elevations and suggested that future presentations include contextual information about neighboring buildings. The Board agreed that landscaping of the motorcourt needed attention, that it should look less like a parking lot and more park-like. Likewise, some additional consideration should be given to developing the view corridors along Clay Street and down Melindy Street. Street-facing garage doors should be eliminated wherever possible. The Board expressed some concern for the metal wall and synthetic trim materials. Mr. Senhauser said that the success of the new design depends heavily on the sensitive selection of materials and careful execution of details. Mr. Raser said that projects such as this can provide the vision and impetus that lead to other innovative development in OTR.

#### **BOARD ACTION**

Because this was a preliminary review, no action by the Board was necessary.

#### **2002 CALENDAR**

The Board unanimously approved the 2002 HCB calendar as presented.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Urban Conservator Forwood announced that City Council will vote upon an extension of the Mohawk IDC Tuesday, December 4, 2001.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting adjourned.

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William L. Forwood  
Urban Conservator

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John C. Senhauser  
Chairman

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Date